



April 30, 2014

Dear Members of the House Committee on Local Government,

Humane Society of West Michigan is an animal shelter located in Grand Rapids, Michigan, whose mission is to promote humane treatment and responsible care of animals in West Michigan through education, example, placement and protection.

Because we see firsthand the effect of pet over population and homelessness, we ask for your support of SB 354, known as "Grant's Bill," to require humane euthanasia in Michigan animal shelters. Grant's bill requires that shelters euthanize dogs and cats via an injection of sodium pentobarbital, which is referred to by euthanasia by injection/EBI. Performed by trained staff, EBI is painless for the animal and takes effect quickly. It is also cost efficient.

Gas chambers have proven to be ineffective and often cannot be used humanely for most animals that require euthanasia. Typically, it is the injured, old, sick, pregnant or very young that require euthanasia. Animals being gassed can only be gassed one time, and it can take 25+ minutes for the animal to die; these minutes can be agonizing for the animal to endure.

There is a human element as well: gas chambers also pose a danger to shelter staff. Carbon monoxide is toxic and can lead to accidental poisoning. Berrien, Branch, Cass and Van Buren Counties, still using gas chambers, also have EBI back-up systems and/or are trained in EBI. Because they are primed to transition to a more humane method of euthanasia, voting yes on SB 354 will not negatively affect their organization; in fact, it would promote humane treatment of animals marked for euthanasia, presents efficiency, and keeps staff safe.

On behalf of homeless pets in Michigan and employees who are tasked with performing euthanasia, we ask that you vote yes for SB 354.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Trudy Ender".

Trudy Ender, Executive Director
Humane Society of West Michigan, 3077 Wilson NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534, 616-791-8153